



SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE & PRESCRIBING

Hello and welcome to the second quarterly bulletin on environmental sustainability and greener prescribing in primary care.

In this bulletin

- 1) *Green Impact for health toolkit***
- 2) *Inhaler prescribing update***
- 3) *Your top tips***

1) THE GREEN IMPACT FOR HEALTH TOOLKIT – *have you signed up yet?*

Gloucestershire ICS is giving **£3000** to GP practices for signing up to its Sustainability scheme, as part of the ICS Green Plan. Choosing sustainability actions from this toolkit is a requirement for the funding. The toolkit provides a helpful pathway to carbon neutrality with bronze, silver and gold awards which recognise progress. You do not have to sign up to the toolkit or achieve an award to keep the money, it is there to help you get started.

*The NHS is the **first** health system in the world to set a carbon net zero target and Gloucestershire is the **first** ICS to incentivise the greening of primary care this way.*

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 16 PRACTICES WHO HAVE SIGNED UP AND ESPECIALLY TO:

Silver award	Price’s Mill, Church Street Medical
Bronze award	Cam & Uley, Chipping Surgery, Leckhampton

2) IIF INHALER PRESCRIBING UPDATE. *How is your practice doing?*

Switching and reducing MDIs is the most powerful way of reducing the primary care carbon footprint:

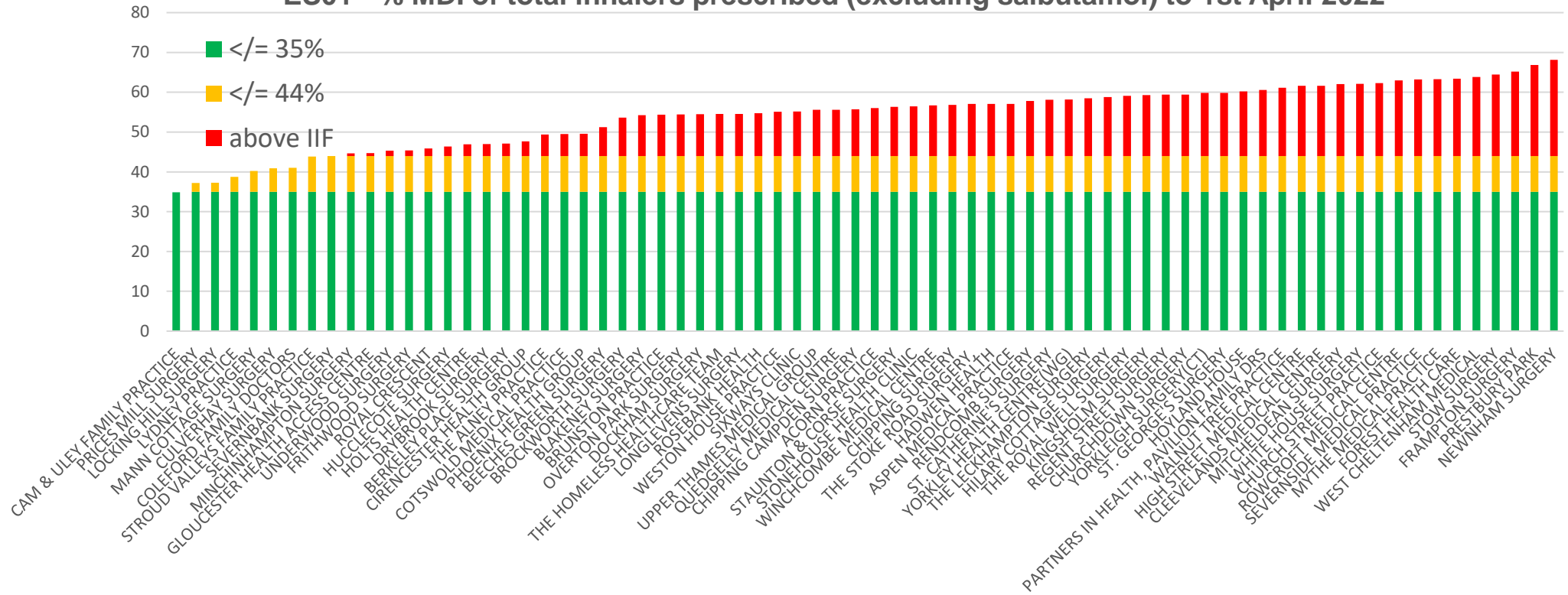
78% of medicines are prescribed in primary care which make up

60% plus of the primary care carbon footprint of which

13% is from the propellants in metered dose inhalers.

ES01 Impact & Investment Fund Indicator: Changing asthma patients from MDI to DPI *where clinically appropriate. Where is your practice in the graph overleaf?*

ES01 - % MDI of total inhalers prescribed (excluding salbutamol) to 1st April 2022



For results of **your GP practice** and **PCN** see [Open prescribing Glos greener measures](#)

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ES-02: Mean carbon emissions per salbutamol inhaler prescribed on or after 1 October (kg CO₂e)

This measure is now reported in open prescribing [open prescribing](#).

Why it matters: The NHS has [committed to reducing its carbon footprint by 80% by 2028 to 2032](#), including a shift to lower carbon inhalers.

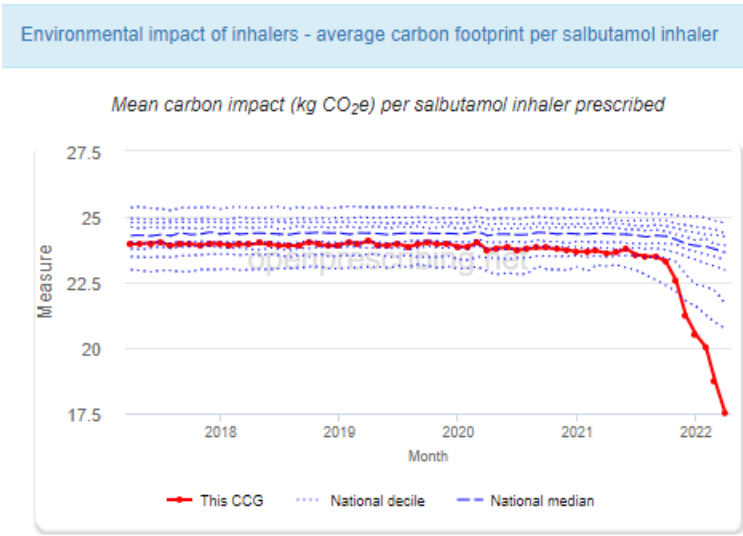
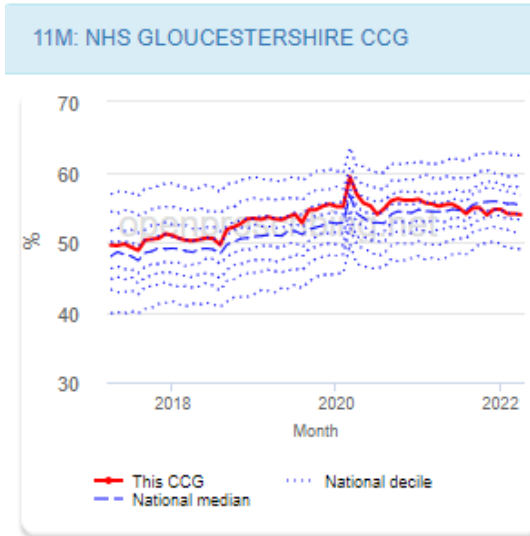
Salbutamol metered dose inhalers (MDIs) are the single **biggest** source of carbon emissions from NHS medicines prescribing.

Prescribing term	Carbon emissions per inhaler (kg CO ₂ e)
Ventolin Accuhaler 200 microgram	0.58
Easyhaler Salbutamol 100 microgram	0.62
Easyhaler Salbutamol 200 microgram	0.62
Salbulin Novolizer 100 microgram	3.75
Airomir 100 microgram	9.72
Airomir Autohaler 100 microgram	9.72
Salbutamol CFC free breath actuated inhaler 100 microgram (GENERIC)	11.79
Salamol CFC-Free Inhaler 100 microgram	11.95
Salamol Easi-Breathe 100 microgram	12.08
Salbutamol CFC free Inhaler 100 microgram (GENERIC)	25.24
Ventolin Evohaler 100 microgram	28.26

[Data from NHS England Investment and Impact Fund 2022/23: Updated Guidance - March 2022](#)

Take home message – **do not prescribe salbutamol MDI generically** – the CF attributed to this is nearly as much as Ventolin and some pharmacies have contracts which means they will be dispensing Ventolin against a generic prescription.

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ES01 53.9% target 44-35%

ES02 17.5kg CO₂e target 22-18kg CO₂e

For results of **your GP practice** and **PCN** see [Open prescribing Glos greener measures](#)

Objective 5: Help create a more sustainable NHS;			
Indicator	Thresholds	Value	Source
ES-01: Metered Dose Inhaler (MDI) prescriptions as a percentage of all non-salbutamol inhaler prescriptions issued to patients aged 12 or over	44% (LT), 35% (UT) intended 23/24 trajectory: 35%/25%	£6.1m / 27 pts	GPES
ES-02: Mean carbon emissions per salbutamol inhaler prescribed (kg CO ₂ e)	22.1kg (LT), 18.0kg (UT) intended 23/24 trajectory: 18.0kg/13.4kg	£9.9m / 44 pts	BSA prescribing data

Gloucestershire 53.9%

Gloucestershire 17.5kg CO₂e

See below for some great waiting room posters/AccuRx attachments from <https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/high-quality-and-low-carbon-asthma-care/projects/resources/>

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TOP TIPS

This is what you have shared:

Active travel/increasing exercise

- **Leckhampton Surgery's 'getting there'** page encouraging patients to cycle to the surgery <https://www.leckhamptonsurgery.co.uk/practice-information/getting-to-the-surgery/>
- The **Mythe** are encouraging and planning lunchtime walks.
- **Church Street** have been awarded RCGP Active Practice Award certificate for encouraging more staff physical activity at work.

Energy saving

- **Cam & Uley** installed an electric hand dryer instead of using paper towels.
- **Cam and Uley** reduced its electricity consumption by 20% with its 'switch off at the wall' policy to decrease shut down currents.
- At least 3 practices have **PV panels** and a further 20 have signed up.

Reducing waste/appropriate disposal of medication

- **Church Street** funded a Terracycle recycling box for patients' empty blister packs – and were shocked when it filled up in under less than 2 weeks after advertising on their FaceBook page. The Patient Participation Group (PPG) are keen to raise funds for another.
- Electronic repeat dispensing (eRD) for suitable patients to reduce journeys to GP surgery or pharmacy for those who use paper repeat slip to request a new prescription.
- Prescribe products which have longer duration eg six monthly Decapeptyl 22.5mg injection rather than three monthly Decapeptyl 11.25mg injection.
- Inclusion of '**always return your unused medication and inhalers to the pharmacy for safe disposal**' at the end of any AccuRx message related to medication.
- Text patients [information about prescription ordering and medicine disposal](#) via AccuRx or a poster up in your waiting room.



Staff communication

- In addition to practice meetings, having a Greener practice page on Teamsnet keeping everyone updated of progress and a reminder of actions individuals can take.

GREENER PRACTICE GLOUCESTERSHIRE

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RETURN YOUR USED INHALERS TO A PHARMACY TO HELP REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT



The propellants used in **some inhalers** are powerful greenhouse gases that contribute to **climate change**. Even after an inhaler is finished it still contains these environmentally damaging gases.

(Please be assured these gases are not harmful to you when you use your inhaler)

Return **all** used inhalers to your local pharmacy for **safe disposal** – Returned inhalers will be incinerated which will destroy the greenhouse gases and prevent inhaler plastics going to landfill



Don't throw used inhalers into your household waste or recycling bins! Landfill disposal of inhalers is harmful to the environment due to left over gases being released into the atmosphere. Plastics from inhalers cannot be recycled using domestic recycling schemes

Make each puff count! – Only order your inhaler when required to reduce waste

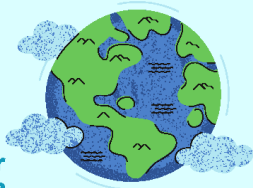
If you have concerns about the environmental impact of your inhaler, make an appointment with your GP practice - don't stop using your inhaler!

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DO YOU USE A RELIEVER (BLUE) INHALER?

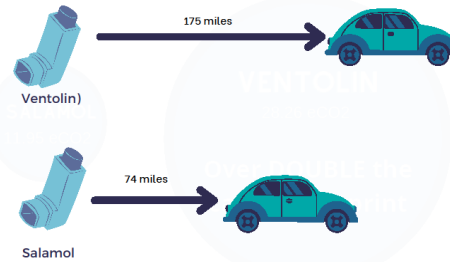
Aerosol spray inhalers (pressurised metered dose inhalers) use propellant gases to deliver medication to the airways. These propellants are powerful greenhouse gases which contribute to climate change. Some aerosol spray inhalers have a lower carbon footprint than others even though they contain the same medicine. Salamol and Ventolin contains the same medicine: salbutamol. They work in the same way and have the same number of doses. However, Salamol has a lower carbon footprint than Ventolin because it contains less propellant gas.

In order to reduce the carbon footprint of our patients' salbutamol inhalers we are changing the prescription to Salamol. This will not affect your asthma care. You may however notice a change in the taste of the inhaler. This is normal.



Greener Practice

Reviewed and approved by NHS England and Improvement inhalers working group



WHAT ELSE CAN I DO TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT?

Make sure your asthma is well controlled and you know how to use your inhaler. **Having well controlled asthma is the best thing you can do for yourself and the planet.** If you have asthma and are using 3 or more reliever inhalers a year, this may suggest your asthma is not well controlled. Please speak to your GP practice to book an asthma review.

Return used inhalers to the pharmacy so they can be disposed in an environmentally safe way.

Speak to your health care professional to ask if you are suitable for a dry powder inhaler. These inhalers do not contain any greenhouse gases and so have a much lower carbon footprint.

Both these posters can be found at <https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/high-quality-and-low-carbon-asthma-care/projects/resources/> and can be attached to an AccuRx message or posted on a board in the waiting room.

Please send any items for inclusion in the next quarterly newsletter to greenerpracticeglos@gmail.com . Consider joining the Greener Practice group; we have WhatsApp groups and bimonthly evening meetings & welcomes new members.